

a Nurse

And I said to them "Y-ou haven't got the sense of a new-born baby."

E12

"But that isn't what most people say, they say: "You've no more sense than ~~you haven't~~ a new-born baby."

Nurse

"But they don't know" she said, "I do." "I had my training as a mid-wife and I was nine years in a lying-in hospital, and I have delivered many babies myself, and the moment you get them in your arms, you know, and their little hands open out like flowers."

E12

Miss Mason said: "children are born p-ersons" and many p-people think the word born should be left out.

Nurse

I know by experience that Miss Mason was right.



33 & 34 ~~Feb~~ <sup>Feb</sup> 1972

Some of the subjects suggested for study are "A child's natural aptitude for knowledge" - "His power of attention" - "The use of curiosity" - "His disposition which comes with his birth" - "His character which is an achievement" - "The new subjects of physiology and psychology" - "Mental and moral science" in fact "The content of human nature, and the impact of the divine upon the human." Furthermore there is the "science of living - Science of education - and the Science of the proportion of things."



iBplcmc72

## TOWARDS A PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION\*

By CHARLOTTE M. MASON (1842-1923)

### A Bird's-eye View

*Arranged by E. Kitching*

A bird's-eye view of the sequence of thought and of the subjects dealt with in Charlotte Mason's books may be useful, as some of the books are out of print.

'These volumes set forth and exemplify a theory of education which many persons have found living and helpful. Some of the members of this body of thought are as old as common sense; others are, perhaps, new. But whether new or old is of little moment; the point is, that the whole is vital and practical, and offers a key to many pressing problems in both home training and school teaching.' C.M.M.

In the Short Synopsis of her Educational Philosophy she writes:

'It must be remembered that a knowledge of these formulae is by no means a knowledge of the principles they aim at summing up.'

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### HOME EDUCATION

#### *The Education of Children under Nine Years of Age*

'In venturing to speak on a mother's duties, I do so with the sincerest deference to mothers, believing that in the words of a wise teacher of men "the woman receives from the Spirit of God Himself the intuitions into the child's character, the capacity of appreciating its strength and its weakness, the faculty of calling forth the one and sustaining the other, in which lies the mystery of education, apart from which all its rules and measures are utterly vain and ineffectual."' (F. D. MAURICE.)

\* Education, from 'educāre'—to bring up a child, physically or mentally; to nourish.

'But just in proportion as a mother has this peculiar insight as regards her own children, she will, I think, feel her need of a knowledge of the general principles of education, founded upon the nature and the needs of all children.' C.M.M.



### Contents

- Part I. Some Preliminary Considerations, Children are Public Trusts. A Method of Education, Method a Way to an End. The Child's Estate. Offending, Despising, Hindering, the Children. Conditions of Healthy Brain Activity. 'The Reign of Law' in Education. 8 p 2cm??
- Part II. Out of Door Life for the Children. A Quiet Growing Time up to Six Years.
- Part III. Education based upon Natural Law. Children have no Self-compelling Power. What is Nature? Habit may supplant 'Nature.' The Physiology of Habit. Habits of Body.
- Part IV. Some Habits of Mind. Some Moral Habits.
- Part V. Lessons as Instruments of Education.
- Part VI. The Will. The Conscience. The Divine Life in the Child.

### PARENTS AND CHILDREN

#### *Some Principles which underlie the Office and Work of Parents and Teachers*

'Believing that the individuality of parents is a great possession for their children, and knowing that when an idea possesses the mind, ways of applying it suggest themselves, I have tried not to weight these pages with many directions, practical suggestions and other such crutches, likely to interfere with the free relations of parent and child. Our greatness as a nation depends upon how far parents take liberal and enlightened views of their high office and of the means to discharge it which are placed in their hands.' C.M.M.

### Contents

The Family. Parents as Rulers, as Inspirers, as Schoolmasters, as Trainers, as Instructors in Religion, as Teachers of Morals. Treatment of Defects. The Claims of Philosophy as an Instrument of Education. Man lives by Faith, Godward and Manward. (*Parents concerned to give*) the Heroic Impulse. Social Questions. Discipline. Sensations. Feelings. Moral Discrimination. Competitive Examinations. A Catechism of Educational Theory. Whence and Whither? The Great Recognition required of Parents. The Highest Council of Perfection for Parents.



'The intention of the following volume is to offer some suggestions towards a curriculum for boys and girls under twelve. A curriculum, however, is not an independent product, but is linked to much else by chains of cause and consequence; and the manner of

curriculum I am anxious to indicate is the outcome of a scheme of educational thought, the adoption of which might, I believe, place educational work generally upon a sounder footing. . . . Having considered the relations of teachers and taught, I have touched upon those between education and current thought. Education should be in the flow, as it were, and not shut up in a watertight compartment. Perhaps, reverence for personality as such, a sense of the solidarity of the race, and a profound consciousness of evolutionary progress, are among the elements of current thought which should help us towards an educational ideal.' C.M.M.

### Contents

Docility and Authority in the Home and the School. Authority not Inherent, but Deputed. How Authority Behaves. "Masterly Inactivity". Some of the Rights of Children as Persons. Psychology in Relation to Current Thought. Some Educational and Psychological Theories Examined. An Adequate Theory of Education. Certain Relations Proper to a Child. Two Luminous Principles. Some Unconsidered Aspects of Physical, Intellectual and Moral Training. Religious Education. Education has Three Faces — a Discipline, an Atmosphere, a Life. Education is the Science of Relations. School Books and how they make for Education. How to use School Books. We are educated by our Intimacies. An Educational Manifesto. Suggestions towards a Curriculum for Children under Twelve. Knowledge *versus* Information. The Love of Knowledge.

### "OURSELVES, OUR SOULS AND BODIES"

'The teaching in Book I is designed for boys and girls under sixteen. That in Book II should, perhaps, appeal to young people of any age; possibly young men and women may welcome an attempt to thrash out some of the problems which must needs perplex them.'

'I know of no other attempt to present such a ground plan of human nature as should enable the young student to know where he is in his efforts to "be good," as the children say. The point of view taken in this volume is, that all beautiful and noble possibilities are present in everyone; but that each person is subject to assaults and hindrances in various ways of which he should be aware in order that he may watch and pray. Hortatory teaching is apt to bore both young people and their elders; but an ordered presentation of the possibilities and powers that lie in human nature, and of the risks that attend these, can hardly fail to have an enlightening and stimulating effect.' C.M.M.

### Book I

#### Self-Knowledge

#### A Dual Self.

The Kingdom of Mansoul, its Riches, Perils and Government.

#### Part I. The House of Body.

Hunger. Thirst. Restlessness and Rest. Chastity. The Five Senses.



**Part II. The House of Mind.**

Ourselves. Intellect. Imagination. The Beauty Sense. Reason.  
The Desires.

**Part III. The House of Heart.**

(i) Love: Pity. Benevolence. Sympathy. Kindness. Generosity.  
Gratitude. Courage. Loyalty. Humility. Gladness.

(ii) Justice: Justice to Others. Justice in Word. Veracity. Essential and Accidental Truth. Lying. Integrity. Opinions. Principles. Self-Ordering.

**Part IV. Vocation.****Book II****Self-Direction****Part I. Conscience.**

Conscience in the House of Body.

The Judge. The Instruction of Conscience. The Rulings of Conscience. Temperance. Chastity. Fortitude. Prudence.

Conscience in the House of Mind.

Opinions 'In the Air.' The Uninstructed Conscience. Moral Judgments. Some Instructors of Conscience. Literature. History. Philosophy. Theology. Nature. Art. Science. Sociology. Self-Knowledge.

The Function of Conscience.

Conviction of Sin. Temptation. Duty and Law.

**Part II. The Will.**

The Will-less Life. Will and Wilfulness. Will not Moral or Immoral. The Will and its Peers. The Function of Will. The Scope of Will. Self-Control. Self-Restraint. Self-Command. Self-Denial. The Effort of Decision. Intention. Purpose. Resolution. A Way of the Will. Freewill.

**Part III. The Soul.**

Its Capacities and Disabilities. The Knowledge of God. Prayer. Thanksgiving. Praise. Faith in God.



SOME STUDIES IN THE FORMATION OF CHARACTER <sup>18p5cmc72</sup>  
(1886—1909)

*Essays in Practical Education*

'I have used the current phrase "formation of character" because it is current, and therefore convenient; but to show that I recognise the fallacy it contains, I venture to repeat the following (very inadequate) definition: His character—the efflorescence of the man wherein the fruit of his life is a-preparing—is original disposition, modified, directed, expanded by education, by circumstances; later, by self-control and self-culture; above all, by the supreme agency of the Holy Spirit, even when that agency is little suspected and as little solicited, that is to say, character is not the

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outcome of a formative educational process; but inherent tendencies are played upon, more or less incidentally, and the outcome is character.

'I should like to urge that this incidental play of education and circumstances upon personality is our only legitimate course. We may not make character our conscious objective. Provide a child with what he needs in the way of instruction, opportunity, and wholesome occupation, and his character will take care of itself; for normal children are persons of good will, with honest desires towards right thinking and right living. All we can do further is to help the child to get rid of some hindrance—a bad temper, for example—likely to spoil his life. In our attempts to do this, our action should, I think, be most guarded. We may not interfere with his psychological development, because we recognise that children are persons, and personality should be far more inviolable in our eyes than property. We may use direct teaching and command but *not* indirect suggestion, or even the old-fashioned "influence." Influence will act, of course, but it must not be consciously brought to bear.

'But we may make use of certain physiological laws without encroaching on personality, because, in so doing, we should affect the instrument and not the agent. The laws of habit and, again, the tendency of will-power to rhythmic operation should be of use to us, because these are affected by brain-conditions and belong to the out-  
work of personality.

*outwork  
of  
personality  
work*



works of personality. . . .

'I am diffident about offering Part IV of this volume, because though the public is wonderfully patient with writers who "adorn the tale" — half the books we read are about other books — I am not sure of equal forbearance towards an attempt to "point the moral." But, indeed, we read in such a hurry, are satisfied with such slight and general impressions, that the leisurely investigation of educational hints thrown out by great authors might well be of use to us. If, in the few following studies, the reader fail to find what Wordsworth calls the "authentic comment," why, he will be provoked into making the right comment for himself, and so the end will be gained.' C.M.M.

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#### Contents

- Part I. Some Studies in Treatment. Temper. Inconstancy. Under a Cloud. Resentment. Ruling with Diligence. Lying. Ability. Desire for Esteem. Hungry Hearts.
- Part II. Parents in Council (Early Forecasts of the P.N.E.U.) — Holidays. A Schoolmaster's Reverie. A Science of Education.
- Part III. Relations between School Life and Home Life. The Schoolboy and the Schoolgirl.
- Part IV. Some Studies in the Evolution of Character. Two Peasant Boys ('Jörn Uhl' and 'Sartor Resartus'); A Genius at 'School' (Goethe); 'Pendennis' of Boniface (Thackeray); 'Young Crossjay' ('The Egoist,' Meredith); Better-Than-My-Neighbour ('Euthyphro').

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TOWARDS A PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

#### AN ESSAY TOWARDS A PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION 'A LIBERAL EDUCATION FOR ALL'

'Those who have the well-being of children at heart are seeking for a standard by which to judge the claims of modern educational theories. In this volume they are offered help towards the understanding of children, of all that goes "to produce a person at his best"; a knowledge, also, of principles, the method of their application, and the practical results of such application.' C.M.M.

[This is the last and, in some respects, the most important and comprehensive work of all; it was published after Charlotte Mason's death. At the publisher's request, the manuscript was reduced and the 'Children's Examination Answers' and 'Some Discussions of the Method by Educational Authorities and Teachers' were omitted. A whole chapter is given to each of the various clauses in the Short Synopsis. The Index gives the consecutive thought under any one heading throughout the volume.]



Contents  
Introduction (Autobiographical)

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Book I

Theory

Self-Education not Self-Expression. Children are Born Persons. The Mind of a Child. Motives for Learning. The Good and Evil Nature of a Child. Well-being of Body, of Mind. Intellectual Appetite. Misdirected Affections. The Well-being of the Soul. Authority and Docility. The Sacredness of Personality. Education is an Atmosphere, a Discipline, a Life. How to make use of Mind. The Way of the Will. The Way of the Reason. The Curriculum. The Knowledge of God, of Man, of the World.

Book II

Theory Applied

A Liberal Education in Elementary Schools — in Secondary Schools. The Scope of Continuation Schools. The Basis of National Strength: Knowledge.

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THE SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD

*The Sunday Meditations*

A synthetic study of the Life and Teaching of Christ in verse, bringing out the philosophical sequence of our Lord's teaching and throwing into relief the incidents of His life.

'E'en so, falls to the lot of every man  
To restate for himself, on his own plan,  
That which we name the Gospel: not his Creed—  
Restatement there shall curious vapours breed!—  
Far other work is his, as line by line  
His mind absorbs the history divine . . .'

Vol. III, page v. C.M.M.



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i, The Holy Infancy. ii, His Dominion. iii, The Kingdom of Heaven.  
iv, The Bread of Life. v, The Great Controversy. vi, The Training of  
the Disciples.

Vols. I-VI (1908-1914). Illustrated with reproductions of paintings  
by Old Masters. (Vols. VII and VIII were never written.)

N.B.—Copies of the Short Synopsis may be had from the P.N.E.U.  
Office, 171 Victoria Street, London, S.W.1.



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# A SHORT SYNOPSIS

OF THE  
EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY ADVANCED BY THE  
FOUNDER OF THE  
PARENTS' NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL UNION.

"No sooner doth the truth . . . . . come into the soul's sight, but the soul knows her to be her first and old acquaintance."  
"The consequence of truth is great; therefore the judgment of it must not be negligent."

IN so far as we hold and profess what is known as P.N.E.U. thought, three duties are before us: (a) To give earnest study to the mastery of the principles of our educational philosophy\*; (b) Having mastered these, to apply them; (c) To make them known. Here follows a short summary of our principles, but it must be remembered that a knowledge of these formulæ is by no means a knowledge of the principles they aim at summing up.

1. Children are born *persons*.
2. They are not born either good or bad, but with possibilities for good and for evil.
3. The principles of authority on the one hand, and of obedience on the other, are natural, necessary and fundamental; but—
4. These principles are limited by the respect due to the personality of children, which must not be encroached upon, whether by the direct use of fear or love, suggestion or influence, or by undue play upon any one natural desire.
5. Therefore, we are limited to three educational instruments—the atmosphere of environment, the discipline of habit

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\* These are set forth at length in the five volumes of the *Home Education Series*, by Charlotte M. Mason, and in her last volume, *An Essay Towards a Philosophy of Education*, all obtainable from the P.N.E.U. Office, 26, Victoria Street, London, S.W.1. The *Home Education Series* is so called from the title of the first volume and not as dealing wholly or principally with 'Home' as opposed to 'School' Education.



and the presentation of living ideas. The P.N.E.U. Motto is: "Education is an atmosphere, a discipline and a life."

6. When we say that "*education is an atmosphere*," we do not mean that a child should be isolated in what may be called a "child-environment" especially adapted and prepared, but that we should take into account the educational value of his natural home atmosphere, both as regards persons and things, and should let him live freely among his proper conditions. It stultifies a child to bring down his world to the child's "level."
7. By "*education is a discipline*," we mean the discipline of habits, formed definitely and thoughtfully, whether habits of mind or of body. Physiologists tell us of the adaptation of brain structures to habitual lines of thought, *i.e.*, to our habits.
8. In saying that "*education is a life*," the need of intellectual and moral as well as of physical sustenance is implied. The mind feeds on ideas, and therefore children should have a generous curriculum.
9. We hold that the child's mind is no mere *sac* to hold ideas; but is rather, if the figure may be allowed, a spiritual *organism*, with an appetite for all knowledge. This is its proper diet, with which it is prepared to deal; and which it can digest and assimilate as the body does foodstuffs.
10. Such a doctrine as *e.g.* the Herbartian, that the mind is a receptacle, lays the stress of Education (the preparation of knowledge in enticing morsels duly ordered) upon the teacher. Children taught on this principle are in danger of receiving much teaching with little knowledge; and the teacher's axiom is "what a child learns matters less than how he learns it."
11. But we, believing that the normal child has powers of mind which fit him to deal with all knowledge proper to him, give him a full and generous curriculum, taking care only that all knowledge offered him is vital, that is, that facts are not presented without their informing ideas. Out of this conception comes our principle that,—
12. "*Education is the Science of Relations*," that is, that a child has natural relations with a vast number of things and

thoughts; so we train him upon physical exercises, nature lore, handicrafts, science and art, and upon *many living* books, for we know that our business is not to teach him all about anything, but to help him to make valid as many as may be of,—

"Those first-born affinities  
That fit our new existence to existing things."

13. In devising a SYLLABUS for a normal child, of whatever social class, three points must be considered:—
  - (a) He requires *much* knowledge, for the mind needs sufficient food as much as does the body.
  - (b) The knowledge should be various, for sameness in mental diet does not create appetite (*i.e.* curiosity).
  - (c) Knowledge should be communicated in well-chosen language, because his attention responds naturally to what is conveyed in literary form.
14. As knowledge is not assimilated until it is reproduced, children should "tell back" after a single reading or hearing: or should write on some part of what they have read.
15. A *single reading* is insisted on, because children have naturally great power of attention; but this force is dissipated by the re-reading of passages, and also by questioning, summarising and the like.
 

Acting upon these and some other points in the behaviour of mind, we find that *the educability of children is enormously greater than has hitherto been supposed*, and is but little dependent on such circumstances as heredity and environment.

Nor is the accuracy of this statement limited to clever children or to children of the educated classes: thousands of children in elementary schools respond freely to this method, which is based on the *behaviour of mind*.
16. There are two guides to moral and intellectual self-management to offer to children, which we may call "the way of the will" and "the way of the reason."
17. *The way of the will*: Children should be taught (a) to distinguish between "I want" and "I will". (b) That the way to will effectively is to turn our thoughts from that which we desire but do not will. (c) That the best way to turn our thoughts is to think of or do some quite different thing,



entertaining or interesting. (d) That after a little rest in this way, the will returns to its work with new vigour. (This adjunct of the will is familiar to us as *diversion*, whose office it is to ease us for a time from will effort, that we may "will" again with added power. The use of *suggestion* as an aid to the will is to be deprecated, as tending to stultify and stereotype character. It would seem that spontaneity is a condition of development, and that human nature needs the discipline of failure as well as of success.)

18. *The way of the reason*: We teach children, too, not to "lean (too confidently) unto their own understanding;" because the function of reason is to give logical demonstration (a) of mathematical truth, (b) of an initial idea, accepted by the will. In the former case, reason is, practically, an infallible guide, but in the latter, it is not always a safe one; for whether that idea be right or wrong, reason will confirm it by irrefragable proofs.
19. Therefore, children should be taught, as they become mature enough to understand such teaching, that the chief responsibility which rests on them as *persons* is the acceptance or rejection of ideas. To help them in this choice we give them principles of conduct, and wide range of the knowledge fitted to them. These principles should save children from some of the loose thinking and heedless action which cause most of us to live at a lower level than we need.
20. We allow no separation to grow up between the intellectual and "spiritual" life of children, but teach them that the divine Spirit has constant access to their spirits, and is their continual Helper in all the interests, duties and joys of life.